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Lawson, Mitsubishi Corporation, others aim for Japan's largest joint point reward program, starting in March next year

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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, Oct. 26

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)

October 27, 2009

08:00 Met at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano, deputy chief cabinet secretaries Matsuno and Matsui. Matsui stayed behind.

10:16 Greeted Dutch Prime Minister Balkenende and posed for photos with him. Attended a welcome event. Later, met Cabinet Secretariat Councilor Hirata. Attended an extraordinary Diet session. Foreign Minister Okada stayed behind.

11:33 Attended a joint plenary meeting of party members of both Houses of the Diet.

12:02 Attended a Lower House plenary session.

13:00 Attended the opening ceremony of the extraordinary Diet session at the Upper House Chamber.

14:02 Attended the Lower House plenary session.

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15:06 Attended an Upper House plenary session.

16:11 Met Hirano at the Kantei. Later met Okada and Vice Foreign Minister Yabunaka.

18:04 Attended a gathering of new party members at the Hotel New Otani.

18:41 Met with Balkenende at the Kantei.

19:26 Held a joint press conference. Hosted a dinner party for Balkenende.

21:26 Met Upper House President Eda.

22:21 Arrived at his private residence.

4) SDP dissatisfied with lack of specifics on Futenma relocation in PM Hatoyama's policy speech

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)

October 27, 2009

While many senior ruling party officials praised Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's policy speech to the Diet for being easy to understand, some Social Democratic Party (SDP) members expressed their dissatisfaction.

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa lavished praises on the speech at a news conference on Oct. 26, saying "it was a good, outstanding, and brilliant speech."

However, the speech merely talked about "working seriously" on U.S. Forces Japan realignment, even though the coalition agreement among the DPJ, SDP, and People's New Party says that the government will deal with this issue "in the direction of a review." SDP Secretary General Yasumasa Shigeno said to reporters: "I got the impression it was somewhat lacking in specifics and certain portions were inadequate."

Meanwhile, the opposition parties criticized the speech for its "abstract contents."

Liberal Democratic Party President Sadakazu Tanigaki commented to reporters that "there was no clear message on where Japan is heading." New Komeito leader Natsuo Yamaguchi also pointed out to reporters that "discourse on how to handle revenue sources for the child allowances and free high school (tuition) was completely absent."

Japanese Communist Party Chairman Kazuo Shii said: "He talked about changing politics repeatedly but did not say how this will be done in concrete terms."

5) Prime Minister Hatoyama delivers his fist policy speech in Diet

SANKEI (Top Play) (Excerpts)

October 27, 2009

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama on Oct. 26 delivered his fist policy address at a plenary session of the Lower House. He noted: "The viewpoints of socially vulnerable people and minorities must be

respected. That is the starting point of my fraternity politics." He reiterated his determination to deliver on showcase pledges made for the August Lower House, including the establishment of a child-care allowance system and virtually free public high school education. However, he has given priority to stating ideals and sending messages, just as the Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) manifesto

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for the Lower House election fell short of proposing specific policies.

Gist of prime minister's policy address

- Q Challenge reform of national politics through a bloodless Heisei restoration.
- Q Materialize politics that will protect the lives and livelihoods of the people under the philosophy of fraternity.
- Q Abolish the style of politics that depends on bureaucrats and clean up the post-war administration.
- Q Pursue close and equal Japan-U.S. relations. Seriously tackle U.S. Forces Japan realignment taking the burdens Okinawa has borne into consideration.
- Q Apologized for the political fund issue. Pledged full cooperation for the investigation.
- Q Have the Government Revitalization Unit eradicate wasteful spending of tax revenues and the National Strategy Office lay down basic guidelines for the management of the economy.
- Q Directly support household budgets through the establishment of a child-care allowance system and free high school education.

6) Debate to kick off at Diet on postal services, security, political donations; government to submit 12 bills

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
October 27, 2009

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama delivered his first policy speech at an extraordinary Diet session, which opened yesterday. The ruling and opposition parties will engage in a battle of words, starting with representative interpellations tomorrow. The government and the ruling camp are giving top priority to the fiscal 2010 budget. They have set a short period of 36 days up to Nov. 30 for the extra Diet session. They also have limited the number of government-sponsored bills to be submitted to the session to 12. The Liberal Democratic Party and other opposition parties are poised to grill the government over issues relating to Hatoyama's political donation reports and the contradiction between the government's decision to appoint a former bureaucrat for the presidency of Japan Post Holdings and the Democratic Party of Japan's policy.

Bills the government plans to submit to the extraordinary Diet session

- 11. Bill to freeze the sale of shares in Japan Post and other companies
- 12. Bill to cope with credit crunch and withdrawal
- 13. Bill to retain shakai-hoken (social insurance) and kosei-nenkin (employee annuity) hospitals as public facilities
- 14. Bill to combat new strains of influenza
- 15. Bill amending the law on the salaries of general government employees
- 16. Bill amending the law on the salaries of special government employees
- 17. Bill amending the law on civil servants' childcare leave
- 18. Bill amending the law on the salaries of court judges
- 19. Bill amending the law on the salaries of prosecutors
- 110. Bill amending the law on childcare leave for court judges
- 111. Bill amending the law on the salaries of Defense Ministry employees
- 112. Bill to inspect cargo ships heading to and from North Korea

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Oct. 28 Representative interpretations
Nov. 12 U.S. President Obama to visit Japan (until the 13th)
Events in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Emperor's enthronement (until the 13th)
Nov. 14 APEC Summit (in Singapore, until the 15th)
Second half Submission by the Government Revitalization Unit of a report on the results of business classification
Nov. 30 The extraordinary Diet session to end
First half of Dec. The government to adopt its fiscal 2010 tax reform plan
Dec. 7 The 15th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15, in Copenhagen, until the 18th)
In late December The fiscal 2010 budget to be determined

7) LDP poised to attack PM Hatoyama for wavering on Futenma relocation

NIKKEI (Page 3) (Full)
October 27, 2009

The government is in disarray on foreign and security policies, with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama seesawing back and forth in his statements on the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan City, Okinawa). The U.S. side is demanding a decision by the time of President Barack Obama's visit to Japan starting on Nov. 12, but the Japanese side has not decided how to respond. The opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is waiting expectantly to expose the Hatoyama administration's shaky foreign and security policies through Diet deliberations.

Hatoyama indicated earlier that he would like to spend more time to arrive at a conclusion after seeing the outcome of the Nago mayoral election in Okinawa in January, the House of Councillors election next summer, and the Okinawa gubernatorial race after that. However, he corrected himself later, saying: "I did not say that the decision will have to come after the Nago mayoral election."

In reaction to the remarks by Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa that "a conclusion should be reached by the end of the year," Hatoyama stated again last weekend that, "We are in the process of reexamining the options; it will take some time," stressing that he will make the final decision. This reflects Hatoyama's wavering between the "consensus" of the people of Okinawa and the U.S. government's demand for an early decision.

Any delay in deciding on Futenma's relocation site will also have an impact on procedures for the relocation of U.S. Marines to Guam already agreed upon by the two governments. The Prime Minister's aides are upset because "he has been saying too much."

Okada, who was annoyed by Hatoyama's wavering statements, advised him: "Mr. Prime Minister, please let us handle this" after the ad hoc cabinet meeting on Oct. 26. Okada himself has been talking about merging Futenma with Kadena Air Base, a plan rejected previously by the U.S. side, which also provides fodder for the opposition's attack.

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8) Ambiguous wording on Futenma in Prime Minister's policy speech

YOMIURI (Page 3) (Excerpts)
October 27, 2009

In his policy speech, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama also referred to challenges that will be potential sources of trouble for the administration as a result of drawing fire from the opposition camp. The Prime Minister and other cabinet ministers' ability to fulfill their accountability in interpellations and other events during the current extraordinary Diet session will be tested.

On the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, he said: "The history of Japan-U.S. agreements and other circumstances will be carefully

examined, and the feelings of the local people will be properly taken into consideration." This statement refers to the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture), the biggest bone of contention between Japan and the United States.

An agreement to form a coalition government with the Social Democratic Party and the People's New Party said that the administration will "look in the direction of making a review" of the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, including Futenma Air Station. There is no denying that the expression used in the policy speech is more ambiguous than the wording in this agreement. This is probably because a conclusion has not been reached among the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, and Defense Ministry Toshimi Kitazawa on the implementation of the Japan-U.S. agreement to build a replacement facility on the coastal area of Camp Schwab (in Nago in the prefecture) by 2014. "I laid out how we will review (the Japan-U.S. agreement) without using the single word 'review,'" the Prime Minister said to reporters at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) after delivering the speech. But the policy direction remains unclear.

Meanwhile, Shigeru Ishiba, Policy Research Council chairman of the major opposition Liberal Democratic Party, gave a lecture in Tokyo yesterday. In it, Ishiba indicated that (Futenma Air Station) must be relocated as was agreed upon between Japan and the United States, saying, "In reality, there is no other option but to relocate it to Nago."

9) Prime Minister's policy speech is void of explanation to people on Futenma relocation

SANKEI (Page 3) (Excerpts)
October 27, 2009

In his policy speech, Prime Minister Hatoyama did not specifically refer to the question of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture), in defiance of the U.S. government's call for a settlement before President Barack Obama visits Japan in November. The Prime Minister voluntarily robbed himself of a golden opportunity to seek the public's opinion of the government's plan while the argument on a settlement before year's end is gaining ground.

The Prime Minister said about the subject of realignment of U.S. forces in Japan: "I will earnestly address the matter by carefully examining the history of Japan-U.S. agreement and properly taking the feelings of the local people into consideration." But he stopped

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short of referring to the modalities of Futenma Air Station in his speech.

10) Okinawa governor: "I strongly hope Futenma facility will be moved out of Okinawa"

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)
October 27, 2009

Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima yesterday issued the following statement on the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan City, Okinawa Prefecture:

"It is regrettable that the government has yet to present any specific policy at present. Okinawa Prefecture strongly hopes that the government will present a plan to move the Futenma facility outside the prefecture in a realistic and concrete form and turn the plan into reality."

Nakaima once expressed his willingness to accept the current plan to relocate Futenma Air Station to the coastal area of Camp Schwab in Nago City, from the viewpoint of removing the danger of the facility. Amid repeated changes in remarks by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and other senior government officials, the governor called for the Futenma facility to be moved out of the prefecture.

The governor said: "I thought it would be unavoidable" to accept the relocation of the facility within the prefecture. A senior prefectoral official commented: "The governor actually does not want the government to push ahead with the plan to relocate the airfield within the prefecture just because the governor has accepted the current plan."

11) Okada: Japan to continue its PKO role

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
October 27, 2009

Foreign Minister Okada gave a speech in a meeting held yesterday at the Foreign Ministry with African ambassadors to Japan for an exchange of views. Okada, referring to Japan's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKO), stated that the Hatoyama government will play an appropriate role in its efforts to help (disputed African nations) build peace and stabilize it. This denotes that Okada is willing to expand the scope of Japan's contributions through such steps as amending the Law for Cooperation on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations or the so-called PKO cooperation law. Okada also stressed that Japan will positively embark on its activities in African nations, saying Japan will make even more contributions for a settlement of conflicts in such countries as the Sudan and Somalia.

12) Prime Minister Hatoyama asks Dutch premier to deal with antiwhaling activities

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
October 27, 2009

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama met yesterday evening with Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende at the Prime Minister's office. During the meeting, Hatoyama referred to the fact that the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, an American antiwhaling organization, has

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tried to block Japanese research whaling by using a Dutch ship, and he asked Balkenende to deal appropriately with the matter to ensure maritime safety. The Dutch prime minister said, "We would like to crack down on any violations by Dutch ships in a stricter manner."

13) Senior vice foreign minister hints at extension of sanctions on North Korea

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
October 27, 2009

Yesterday at the first joint policy meeting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Senior Vice Foreign Minister Tetsuro Fukuyama said in reference to the total trade embargo on North Korea, which will expire next April: "If there is no change in the situation, we will extend it."

14) Opposition parties geared up to thoroughly pursue prime minister's political funds issue

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
October 27, 2009

The major focus at meetings of the Budget Committees of both chambers of the Diet will be the prime minister's political funds issue. Names of the deceased or those who have not donated have been entered as individual donors in his political funds management body's political fund reports. The prime minister himself and two of his secretaries have been charged on suspicion of violating the Political Funds Control Law. The prime minister contends that his former secretaries acted on their own discretion.

In a policy speech given on Oct. 26, the prime minister apologized for this problem and said, "I will fully cooperate with the investigation so as to rebuild trust in politics." However, he refrained from giving a detailed account, citing that doing so would affect the investigation.

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) President Sadakazu Tanigaki at an informal meeting of members of the Lower and Upper Houses displayed a confrontational stance, saying, "We will attack the ruling camp's Achilles heel in a Diet debate." A senior LDP official on the same day indicated his intention to call on the government to hold meetings of the Lower House Budget Committee for five days, taking the advantage of the prime minister's lengthy policy speech. The aim is to secure enough time to thoroughly pursue the issue. However, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is hoping to keep it as short as possible at a one-day meeting.

Commenting on the prime minister's speech, New Komeito leader Natsuo Yamaguchi said, "Policy directions similar to those the New Komeito has indicated were seen throughout." Although he did not indicate an uncompromisingly confrontational stance, he will likely fall in step with the LDP over the prime minister's political funds donation issue.

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